THE

TWO YELLOW-BIRDS.

Embellished with Cuts.

PROVIDENCE.
PUBLISHED BY GEO. P. DANIELS.
1839.

CHILDREN'S BOOK
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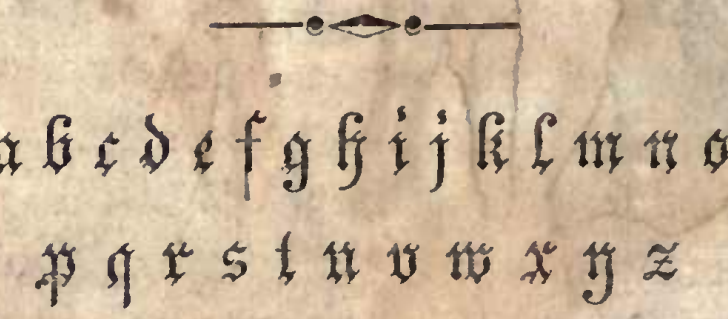

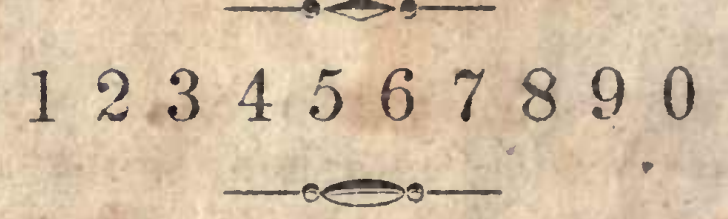

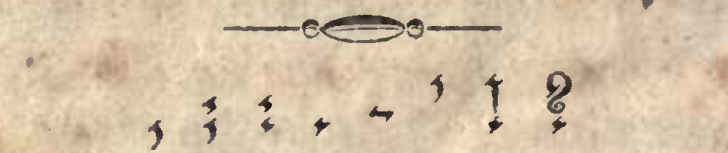

THE

TWO YELLOW-BIRDS.

When Lucy Tracy was a very little girl, her mother had a beautiful yellow bird. He was quite tame, and would come out of his cage, and sit upon Mrs. Tracy's plants, and then fly upon the breakfast table, and pick the crumbs from the white cloth, while Lucy and her father and mother were eating their breakfast.

Little Lucy had no brother or sister to eat breakfast with her; so that she enjoyed very much having Black-pate, as she called him, (from the black tuft on his head,) picking around her; for she could chatter to him, as if he were no older than herself. And she would often give him lumps of sugar, which he

would peck at, while she held them in her fingers.

She would stand by her mother, as she filled his glass cups, one with hemp-seed and the other with water, and brush all the old seeds from the bottom of his cage; for birds love a clean cage, as well as little girls love a clean house.

Lucy and the little Yellow-Bird.

He liked very much to fly into a basin of water and flutter his wings, bob his head in and out, and spatter Lucy's face. Then she would laugh and clap her

hands, and he would do it again, as if to make her laugh the more.

He was not a Canary bird; but one of the wild yellow birds, that fly about in the woods and fields. He did not seem to mourn his liberty, but appeared generally very happy in his wire house. His kind mistress took good care of him. She never trusted any one but herself to wash his cage or give him food. She knew poor birds often to suffer from hunger and thirst, by the neglect of those who are *told* to take care of them. She would often say to Lucy, "It is a hard thing, my little girl, to be shut up in a cage, as this poor bird is; therefore, we ought to do all we can to make him comfortable. It is very wicked to let little birds want seeds, or water, either to drink, or wash themselves in."

"But mother, if he don't like his cage, what makes him sing so sweetly, when he flies into it, after he has washed himself in the little basin you keep for him? That don't look as if he were unhappy."

"I did not say that he was unhappy;

but he has a feeling of confinement, when he flies against the wires of his cage, as if he wished to get out; just as you have when you find yourself shut up in a room, when *you* wish to get out. He sings to show his gratitude for his food, and while he is eating, feels quite as happy as when he is in his native woods; but after he has done, he wants to fly about just as you want to run. Soon he is hungry again; and then goes to his seeds to eat; and again sings his thanks."

"But, mother, if you think poor Black-pate is not happy, why don't you let him fly away, and go into the green woods again?" "Why, Lucy, look out of the window, and see if there be any green woods where he *can* fly?" Lucy ran to the window, but soon returned, exclaiming, "Oh dear! no, mother; the ground is all covered with snow; and the trees are all frost instead of leaves. Poor Black-pate! you are better where you are, for the cold snow would freeze your little feet and you could find no seeds

upon the frosty trees and bushes. Wait till spring comes; and then, mother, shan't you let him fly, if he chooses?" "Yes, I only bought him of the boys, who brought him here in the beginning of winter, to keep him until the warm spring comes. I told them I would take him at the price they named, if they would not catch any more, which they promised."

In about a month from this time, the snow was all gone—the buds upon the trees began to swell, and some of them had burst into leaves. The sun was quite warm; and Lucy remembered her mother's promise to Black-pate. One morning, just before the sun rose, Mrs. Tracy called her little daughter to walk with her into the garden. "Come, Lucy, let us see if Black-pate would like to bid us good bye this fine morning." Mr. Tracy took the cage, and Mrs. Tracy and Lucy followed him into the garden; he hung it upon a tree, that was nearly covered with young leaves, and opened the door. The bird flew in and out sev-

eral times, pecked at the leaves, flew from bough to bough, sung some of its sweetest notes, but did not fly out of the garden. They left the cage upon the tree, and Black-pate at liberty to go or stay, just as he pleased.

A Walk in the Garden.

After breakfast, Lucy sat down with her mother, in a parlor, that led to a piazza, looking into the garden, to study her lesson. Often she started up from her book and ran out, to see if Black-pate was still there. Her mother did not speak to her, for some time ; but at

last, she said, "Lucy, how many words can you spell?" "I am afraid not one; for I am thinking all the time about dear Black-pate, and how sad I shall be to-morrow morning, when I don't see him on the table. And I keep looking out, to see if he has got back to his cage. I am afraid, mother, I am selfish; for every time I look out and see him flying about, I feel sorry. Is not that selfish?" "Yes, my dear, it certainly is; for it is preferring your own happiness to that of your little bird; which but a few weeks ago you begged me to set at liberty. I am glad you see it is selfish, for you will try not to indulge it, since you know it is wicked. Instead of thinking how sad *you* will be to-morrow morning, think how happy your *bird* will be, hopping about in the beautiful fresh air. And you may get up as early as you please, and go into the garden, and see if he will not give you a sweeter song than you ever heard in the house.

The next morning, as soon as the day began to dawn, Lucy awoke, and called

from her little bed, "Mother, do you think Black-pate is awake yet?" "I don't know, but you may get up and see." So up jumped Lucy, and put on her clothes, and away she ran into the garden. She found the cage empty, but soon heard Black-pate, and some other birds, singing most briskly. She strewed some seeds and crumbs of bread upon the ground for them, and had great pleasure in running about and hearing them sing, till breakfast was ready. She then went into the house, and after breakfast she sat down to sew with her mother. She finished all the work that her mother required, and repeated her lesson without missing one word.

She was so good a girl, that in the afternoon her fond mother took her to ride with her, a few miles, to visit a friend, who had some children about her own age. They walked in the woods and saw and heard many little birds chirp and sing; and Lucy enjoyed very much a variety of plays with the children, and

passed a part of the time very pleasantly in swinging.

Lucy swinging.

At night she returned home by the light of a beautiful moom, and went to bed very happy. In the morning she went into the garden to hear Black-pate sing; but no Black-pate was there! At first she felt a little sad; but she remembered how happy the little birds were, that she had seen the day before; and she soon sent her sad feelings away.

A few days after this, a gentleman, a friend of her father, came to dine with them. As he was very fond of children,

he talked a great deal with Lucy; and she told him the story of her bird, Black-pate. He listened very kindly to her, and when she had finished, he said, "And so, my little girl, then your fine cage is quite empty and useless now?" "Yes, sir," said Lucy. "Well," said he, "I have some young birds that were born in a cage; and they will not be unhappy to live in one, if they are taken good care of; for they have never known any other home. Now if your mother is willing, and you would like it, I will send you one to-morrow morning, to put into your empty cage. And I dare say you will never forget to feed him, and give him fresh water to drink and wash in, every morning."

Mrs. Tracy was quite willing; and Lucy promised she would not forget.—The next morning the gentleman sent the bird; for he always remembered his promises.

This bird was not so handsome as Black-pate; his color was not as brilliant, nor his neck so long and graceful;

Lucy's new bird.

but he sung very sweetly; and Lucy soon found that she loved him quite as well as she had ever loved Black-pate. Though only six years old, she never once forgot to give him fresh seeds and water, and to clean his cage every morning. She was so small that she could not take down the cage from the sunny window, where it hung, nor put it back, after she had cleaned it; but her father was so much pleased with her attention to her little favorite, that he was always ready to help her.

For nearly two years, Lucy thought

that her bird grew handsomer and sung more sweetly every day. She used to go to school in the morning, and when she came home, would often bring flowers to dress his cage with, or chickweed, and the long seed vessels of the plantain, which little birds love very much; and he always repaid her with a song.

But the third spring, he began to droop and look sick; he left off singing, and almost left off eating. He would sit on his roost for a long time, hanging his head, as if he had not strength to hold it up.

It grieved Lucy very much to see him so. She put saffron into the water; buds of saffron about his cage; gave him lumps of nice sugar; and spread, every morning, large branches of fresh chickweed over his cage; but all to no purpose.

One morning, poor little Pet, for that was the name she gave him, looked more sick than ever. She changed the water and the seeds; though the seeds she had put in fresh the day before, had

not been touched. She dressed his cage with all the flowers she could find in the month of May, and then went to school with a heavy heart. At noon she came home, and her dear Pet lay on his back upon the bottom of his cage. His sufferings were all ended. The little bird was dead!

Lucy crying for the loss of Pet.

Poor Lucy wept bitterly; this was the heaviest affliction she had ever known. She laid down upon her mother's bed, and sobbed aloud. Mrs. Tracy knew that the sorrows of children are not last-

ing, though they are severe for the time. She therefore did not, at first, think it best to endeavor to restrain her tears; but she found that if not checked, she would make herself ill. She would not eat any dinner; and she was unfit to go to school in the afternoon. Her mother, at length, said, "My dear child, you must not give way thus to your grief for the loss of a bird. I know that you loved Pet very much, and that he gave you a great deal of pleasure; but you must remember, that sorrow for the death of a bird ought not to unfit you for every thing. Now, by thus crying, you have been obliged to stay from school, and have lost several hours work upon the little frock you were making for your aunt; besides making your head ache so much, that you cannot study your lesson this evening. I feel very much for your grief; but you are old enough to understand that all sorrow which prevents us from doing our duty, is wrong —it is selfish. While you were laying upon the bed crying and sobbing, do you

think your father and I could enjoy our dinner? I assure you we did not. And your father went to the store with a very sad countenance. I hope when he comes home, you will meet him with a smiling face, and let him see, that, though you loved your bird very much, you love him more. And I hope, my little girl, you will learn a lesson, from this first sorrow, which will be of use to you all your life, viz. not to feel so strong an attachment to any object, that the loss of it will unfit you to do any thing that it is your duty to do."

Lucy was in general a good girl; and she loved her parents very much, for they were always kind to her; though they never indulged her in any thing they thought wrong. She attended to what her mother said, and was sorry she had grieved them so much. She got up from the bed, washed her face and eyes in cold water, combed her hair smooth, and when her father came home, he found her sewing with her mother. She was a little sad; but she

cried no more, and answered very pleasantly when any one spoke to her.

A friend of her father passed the evening with them. He saw that Lucy was not so lively as usual, and inquired the cause. He told her he would paint her a likeness of her little bird.

We have said that the bird was not handsome; but he was a very sweet songster. And we trust all our little readers know, that beauty of person alone will never recommend either little birds or little girls, to the affections of their friends.

When Lucy became a woman, though she met with many heavy afflictions, she always kept in mind, that "all sorrow which makes us neglect our duty to our fellow-beings, is selfish, and of course wrong."

MARIA.

Come, Maria, my dear, said her mamma, let us take a walk, and I will show you some pretty things.

Maria was quite pleased to hear this, and ran to fetch her bonnet and cloak.

Her mamma then took her by the hand, and led her out at the door, and then out at the gate, and then they came into the road; and as they went to the place where her mamma meant to show her little girl the fine things, they saw a number of sheep and lambs sporting in the open fields.

They soon came to the place, and there they saw very fine flowers, which smelled so sweetly that little Maria felt quite happy with the sights and scents.

"Here, my dear," said the lady to her little girl, "this is a rose; what a fine pink hue it has got! Smell it, my dear,

for I am sure that you will like it ;—did you ever smell any thing so sweet ?—There is a bud of the rose : see what fine soft moss grows on it, and how close it is wrapped round with green leaves to guard it whilst it is young and tender.

Maria and her Mamma.

"That, Maria, is a stalk ; it is like a little bush of red flowers, of a very nice scent. It is so fine a one, it looks like a young tree. There is a wall flower : some like the smell of them very much, but some think they are too strong.

"There is a pink: it is very sweet to smell of.

"That is a heart's ease: it is a very pretty little flower. What a fine purple color on that leaf; it is like velvet; but it has no scent.

Admiring the Flowers.

"Neither has the blue-bell, which you see there, though it looks very pretty."

Maria's mamma shewed her a great many more flowers, and told her the names of them.

"Oh! what flower is that, mamma," said little Maria, pointing with her fin-

ger to a very tall and large flower.—"That, my dear, is a sun-flower."—"Oh! how large it is," said Maria, "it is like a sun in this fine garden."

Her mamma then took her all over the garden, and Maria asked her what the name of this thing, and what the name of that thing was, all the time they were there.

Her mamma then picked her little girl a very pretty bunch of flowers, which Maria took home with great care, and then put them in one of the vases which was in the parlor, and put water to them, to keep them alive as long as she could.

Her mamma took home a large bunch for herself, to put into the large China jar, to make the room look lively, and smell sweet with the scent of it, and a very fine flower-pot it was.

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